The Trollopian Geopolitical Aesthetic

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[4th part of conference clusters]

Abstract

Trollope’s reputation as a formally dull post-1848 realist persists even though the period of his Palliser series (1864–1879) was characterized by intense political and imperial dynamism. While most of Trollope’s novels during this period exemplify a historically engaged realism, The Eustace Diamonds is distinct for its rare meditation on empire in South Asia—a topic that Trollope seems purposely to have avoided. Trollope’s fourth Palliser novel captures the vexed ethics of a so-called liberal imperialism through two classic characters—Lucy Morris and Lord Fawn—and their interactions with the Sawab of Mygawb, a “non-character” who marks the novel’s geopolitical unconscious. But the novel’s most formally distinct features revolve around representation of Lizzie Eustace, who figures Trollope’s uneasiness over the New Imperial era’s neo-feudal aesthetics. Trollope associated the New Imperialism with Benjamin Disraeli whose Jewish ethnicity he tied to a “conjuring” political agency that could master the theaters of mass democracy and imperial expansion. In The Eustace Diamonds, Lizzie becomes the embodiment of an actively performed New Imperial aesthetic. As a Disraeli-like schemer, she introduces a stylistic referentiality that is alien to Trollope’s ‘pellucid’ linguistic ideal. Where Trollope’s sociological and global capitalist novels offer nuanced aesthetic capture, Lizzie marks the representational limits of such realism. Like the Sawab, she is the sign of a Trollopian power to stretch form beyond the crude anti-realism of the racialized scapegoat.

In this article, I want to revisit Trollope’s reputation as the Victorian novel’s most formal bore. In George Levine’s words, ‘the solidity and complacency of its narrative movement through time’ makes Trollopian realism the work of ‘sheer plod’ (203). Trollope’s reputation as a non-experimental and politically inert realist is characteristic of a long critical tradition, including the seminal Marxisms of Georg Lukács and Fredric Jameson, which almost reflexively dismisses fiction like Trollope’s as formally passé: his realist métier surpassed by modernism, his British context deemed less politically engaged than French, his post-1848 situation found too politically static, and his technique thought more conventional than that of more innovative contemporaries.¹ Yet, the irony is that Trollope is arguably the most Balzacian of British realists, while the period of the Palliser novels (1864–1879) was one of intense political self-consciousness and imperial dynamism. Opening in the aftermath of the Indian rebellion and closing with the arrival of the New Imperialism, this supposed age of equipoise was noteworthy for its reinvention of empire at a time when Britain was also reinventing itself as a mass democracy. It is a period to which no criticism focused on a European crisis of 1848 can do full justice.

According to Jameson, modernism emerged as art strove to breach the cognitive disjunction between localized metropolitan experience and the global conditions that underlie it. Jameson thus assumes that the disconnect between metropolitan experience and imperial structure began (like modernism) in the late nineteenth century—with the full-blown emergence of the New Imperialism. By contrast, most of the nineteenth century, he believes, corresponded to a ‘national’ stage of capitalism during which realist form
represented the intact sovereignty of a fully ‘immanent’ metropolitan life (‘Modernism and Imperialism’ 51). In actuality, however, imperialism’s ‘spatial disjunction’ began much earlier and was more multi-faceted than Jameson’s focus on territorial empire allows. From a Trollopian standpoint, the problem is that no criticism determined to view realism as a pre-imperial form can recognize Trollope’s imaginative engagement with a globally embedded mid-nineteenth century. While the Barsetshire series (as I have elsewhere argued) narrates the collapse of a mythic heirloom sovereignty in the face of British expansion in the world’s temperate zones, Palliser novels such as *The Eustace Diamonds* (1873), *Phineas Redux* (1874), and *The Prime Minister* (1876) are, like the contemporaneous *The Way We Live Now* (1875), global capitalist novels: novels of breached metropolitan sovereignty in which, as Walter Kendrick suggests, a ‘traditional British enclosure’ is ‘invaded by goldiggers, speculators, and Jews’ (136–7).3 Realism’s formal vitality does not, therefore, end in 1848 but, rather, begins in 1857—when a romanticized Tory conception of empire as neo-feudal relation begins to displace the old liberal myth of ‘free trade’ in South Asia creating, among other effects, a crisis of liberal ethics. Trollopian form is, in this sense, a *locus classicus* of the Victorian geopolitical aesthetic at work. Neither naïve nor self-naturalizing, Trollope’s realism aspires to that ‘objective’ grasp that, for Lukács, historically vivifies an otherwise random play of objects and psychological effects and, for Jameson, maps the spatial disjunction that confounds lived experience (Lukács 171–77, Jameson ‘Cognitive’).

Trollope’s divided views on British expansion illustrate the complexity of mid-Victorian imperialism. Although the author was a warm enthusiast of ‘Greater Britain’—the fantasy of a transcontinental union between Anglo-Saxon colonies of settlement—he was a highly ambivalent commentator on Britain’s ‘extended dominion over black subjects’ in the global South.5 Thus, in 1875, a year before Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India, Trollope wrote that India was not ‘a colony…in any proper sense, as the English who live there are very few, and are confined to those who rule the real people of the land’ (*Tireless* 93). To claim India as an imperial ‘keystone’ was, according to Trollope, ‘preposterous’ (Davidson 320). Trollope’s unease with territorial empire expressed itself primarily as avoidance: India seldom figures in his fiction and, though he penned lengthy travelogues on the West Indies, North America, Australia, and South Africa, Trollope wrote that traveling on the subcontinent would be ‘a bore’ (*Letters* 61). *The Eustace Diamonds* thus offers a rare Trollopian meditation on empire in South Asia, albeit one that emerged indirectly, via the author’s love-hate relation with Wilkie Collins’s *The Moonstone* (a work Trollope criticized not for its imperial themes but for its formal emphasis on plot).6

Not coincidentally, *The Eustace Diamonds* is also one of the most formally distinctive works in Trollope’s oeuvre. In addition to the densely rich sociological realism for which Trollope is renowned, it features supplementary mutations, unique to its focus on the Indian encounter.7 Thus, while Trollope’s realism at its best always instances the geopolitical aesthetic at work, *The Eustace Diamonds* is partly an experimental novel—a work of realism and anti-realism at once. Whereas the hallmark of Trollope’s realism is, by his own account, life-like characters—‘human beings’ much like his readers, ‘with not more of excellence, nor with exaggerated baseness’ (*Autobiography* 96)—*The Eustace Diamonds* features two striking deviations. There is the Sawab of Mygawb, a marginalized ‘non-character’ whose recurrence in the romance plots of Trollope’s frustrated liberals identifies him as the sign of the novel’s geopolitical unconscious.8 And there is Lizzie Eustace, the novel’s famous anti-heroine, a figure of what I shall call *lived performativity*, a mode of subjectivity that Trollope associated with Benjamin Disraeli and the emerging
New Imperialism and which, as a conservative liberal ill at ease with projects of territorial empire, he disdained on aesthetic as well as ideological grounds.

*The Eustace Diamonds* captures the vexed ethics of a so-called ‘liberal’ imperialism through the Sawab’s interrelation with two classic Trollopian characters, Lucy Morris, the long-suffering governess who fights for her right to a husband, and Lord Fawn, the charismatically challenged party politician who is Under-Secretary of State for India as well as an early suitor for Lizzie’s hand.9 Superficially a feminine paragon and self-appointed defender of the Sawab, Lucy in actuality instances a test of liberal-imperial morality because her supposed advocacy for the prince serves her interests in retaining Frank Greystock, her errant fiancé. Lord Fawn, a respectable man made interesting, according to *The Times* and *The Spectator*, is the novel’s chief embodiment of a compromised liberal-imperial lifeworld. Through his characterization the novel renders Parliament as a metropolitan institution enmeshed in the moral fog of a territorial empire.10 Where the Sawab is first introduced in light of Lucy’s marital cares, his later appearances haunt the amatory woes of Fawn. As the Tories transform from defenders of the Sawab to avowed ‘Lizzieites,’ exposing Fawn to gossip and ridicule, the Under-Secretary is ‘hardly as true to the affairs of India as he…wished’ (1.143). His struggles to extricate himself from his promise to Lizzie eventually supplant the Parliamentary story of the Sawab’s claim to his throne. The precise fate of the Indian royal—re-enthronement? incarceration? some Fawnian compromise between the two?—is never divulged.

To be sure, such rendering of a South Asian sovereign as a voiceless subaltern might seem merely to extend the racial hierarchism of Trollope’s travel writings. The author’s vision of encounter between ‘races,’ though always premised on the alleged superiority of Anglo-Saxons, varied according to the relevant geopolitical aim—from the extinction discourse of his writings on Australia, to the racial hybridity he described in the West Indies, to the paternalistic kinship he advocated in Ireland but rejected in India and other Southern locales.11 Clearly, Trollope was enough of a racial absolutist to disdain the idea of a ‘liberal’ civilizing mission bent on anglicizing Indians, but enough of a liberal to dislike the premise of territorial domination without justifiable cause. Thus, the Sawab of Mygawb is a non-raced figure—a blank screen who marks the novel’s geopolitical unconscious—not because Trollope resisted the notion of ‘Oriental’ essence, but because the novel captures an imperial guise that takes ‘Oriental’ essence for its alibi. As the Sawab does not speak, the prince figures an entire discourse over the Indian sovereign which adumbrates the New Imperialism’s neo-feudal aesthetic.

If Trollope’s most visible emblem of liberal demoralization is the dejected Fawn, there are, nonetheless, troubling ethical dilemmas beyond bureaucratic complicity and the postlapsarian governmentality that Nicholas Dames nicely captures as ‘nothing more or less than a career’ (268). The novel’s most noteworthy twist on the Lukácsian ‘typical character’ is one whose expropriative persona not only performs the New Imperial determination to invent heirlooms but, also, in doing so, challenges the formal conventions of Trollopian characterization as it is usually conceived. Consider Trollope’s oft-cited defense of his realistic characters in *An Autobiography*. Far from cynical, Trollope is claiming a didactic function for his fiction: if readers recognize his characters as ‘like to themselves,’ then his novels ‘might succeed in impregnating’ their ‘mind[s]…with a feeling that honesty is the best policy, that truth prevails while falsehood fails’ (96). Trollope’s aim is less to inculcate sympathetic understanding (in the mode, say, of George Eliot) than to seize fiction’s potential to illuminate the relative merits of actually existing moralities. Trollopian realism is thus premised on the belief that an empirically definable and
sociologically acute fiction can positively reproduce—and not simply invent—normative differences between fair and foul, true and false.

Trollope’s doctrine of mixed human nature is borne out almost throughout his career. If its famous debut is *The Warden*’s satire on the characterological extremism of Charles Dickens and Thomas Carlyle, it remains visibly intact even in the dark, quasi-naturalist landscape of *The Way We Live Now* in which the narrator writes of Lady Carbury: ‘The woman was false from head to foot, but there was much of good in her, false though she was’ (1.17). Likewise, later Palliser novels such as *Phineas Redux* and *The Prime Minister* ennable—at times even heroize—exemplary characters. The thoroughgoing corruption these novels depict does not neutralize or even privatize human virtue so much as portray public life as a grueling duty (Palliser) or exacting challenge (Finn) to which ethical exemplars must submit. When Trollope diverges from mixed characterization, it is usually to depict racialized stock figures such as the chronically ‘greasy’ Joseph Emilius (*Eustace Diamonds* 2:241)—a point to which I’ll return.

In *Phineas Redux*, the sequel to *The Eustace Diamonds*, the title character, though as ambitious and needy a young MP as was Frank Greystock, incarnates an ideal of ‘political honesty’ unknown to the story of Lizzie’s diamonds (1.320). Whereas Greystock’s partisan address on the Sawab is wholly cynical, Finn’s speech calls out Conservative opportunism and checks his own party’s machine in a single stroke. He is both the anti-Greystock, a man who refuses to play politics for self-advancement, and the anti-Fawn, a career politician who averts lackeydom. Finn’s political victory, small though it is, provides a strong normative contrast to the unprincipled politics for which Daubeny, the Disraelinesque Tory leader, stands.

How, then, does *The Eustace Diamonds* compare to its sequel? As contemporary reviewers observed, Trollope’s third Palliser lacks any significant counterweight to the ‘sordidness’ that is its most ‘powerful effect’ (Smalley 373). Perhaps the most Balzacian of Trollope’s works, the novel’s milieu is so palpably suffused by dishonesty that the morality of many characters merely emblematizes prevailing material forces. Whereas in the Finn novels, the conflict between ideals and ambition creates the moral tension for political Bildungsroman, in *The Eustace Diamonds*, Greystock and Fawn are the all-but-determined products of a social environment. The *Eustace Diamonds* thus evinces a sociology so deterministic it snuffs out idealism, divorcing its thick account of the world-as-it-is from the presumption that what-it-ought-to-be, is, in some sense, immanent if not generally prominent in existing social structures.

Nonetheless, if *The Eustace Diamonds* stands out for the extent of its anti-idealism, it also, as I’ve suggested, offers an anti-realism distinct from, even antithetical to, the mode of naturalist unmasking. As contemporary critics were the first to observe, Lizzie is not a mixed character. So far from the credible ‘human being’ that Trollope prescribed, Lizzie is, according to *The Spectator*, a ‘living and breathing pretence of dissimulation’ (Smalley 373)—the trope of ‘paste’ diamonds in human shape (*Eustace Diamonds* 2:230). This formal mutation springs from the novel’s intensified geopolitical aesthetic: a world-historical character in the Lukácsian sense, Lizzie figures an emerging fusion between imperial expropriation and hyper-romantic aesthetics.

Although one might turn to Walter Bagehot for the argument that feudal theatrics usefully depoliticize the masses, or to Tory imperialists such as Lord Salisbury on their role in creating a ‘show’ of Indian sovereignty, for an example of neo-feudal invention conceived as lived performativity one must turn to Benjamin Disraeli—surely the only British prime minister to have been the subject of a scholarly volume devoted to ‘self-fashioning.’ As Michael Ragussis has noted, Trollope’s heightened anti-Semitism coincided
with ‘the pinnacle’ of Disraeli’s political career (234). For Trollope, Jewish ethnicity was tied to a ‘conceiving’ political agency that could master the theaters of mass democracy and imperial expansion.¹⁴ Thus, Trollope’s association between opportunism, showy performativity, and anti-Semitic caricature of Disraeli became almost a staple feature of his later writing.

As leader of the Tory party, Disraeli was closely associated with the New Imperialism: if the Royal Titles Act reinvented the monarchy as, in Ian Baucom’s words, ‘the place where England and India became one,’ then Disraeli was the man behind the curtain (44). Disraeli appeared to Trollope (among others) as an imperial aesthete, eager to turn once dignified institutions into fodder for grandiose personal and political designs. ‘As the “Jew premier” with an “Asiatic mind,”’ writes Lynn Voskuil, Disraeli was ‘represented as an exotically alien, manipulative mountebank who had bargained away the nation’s authentic English identity and had imperialized England almost beyond recognition’ (142).

As exemplified by Joseph Emilius, the cartoon Jewish villain of The Eustace Diamonds and Phineas Redux, Trollopian anti-Semitism is egregious—an effort to concentrate the disruptive spatio-temporal pressures of capitalist globalization—but hardly formally dynamic. It is thus through Lizzie, the consummate ‘actress’ and ‘female swindler’ whom fans of the novel loved to hate (Eustace Diamonds 1:17, 1:229), that Trollope creatively figured the anti-realist aesthetics of Disraelian fiction and politics. Phrases such as ‘sly mendacity,’ ‘cynic solitude,’ and ‘paint and unreality’ apply to either Dizzy or Lizzie and Trollope used the trope of ‘paste diamonds’ to describe both.¹⁵ The daughter of a presumably Anglo-Saxon family, Lizzie is not directly associated with ‘Asian blood’; but she is Orientalized and described as a guilty ‘blackamoor’ in need of ‘washing white’ (1:321).¹⁶ Stylistically, Lizzie’s cultivation of a Byron-adulating, hyper-romantic persona parallels the portrait of Disraeli as one whose ‘quest for empire’ was the product of a ‘mind infected’ with grand Jewish ‘ideas’ (Wohl 394). Whereas the novelist Disraeli, according to Trollope, astonished readers with the ‘uncommon’ and ‘grand’ (Autobiography 166), the character of Lizzie is driven by a ‘passion for romance and poetry,’ even a ‘grand idea’ (Eustace Diamonds 1:99, 1:43).

At a structural level, Lizzie’s hyper-romantic acquisitiveness parodies imperialism run amok. Urged to return the diamonds so as to mitigate her guilt, she declares that she will ‘never give them up’ for they are her ‘very own’ (2:105). The diamonds, she tells Frank, have ‘scorched [her] horribly’ and ‘nearly killed’ her, ‘like the white elephant which the Eastern king gives to his subject when he means to ruin him’ (2:123). There is a telling parallel, a geopolitical insight at work, between Lizzie’s determination to retain burdensome booty and the imperial onus that J. R. Seeley, another liberal enthusiast of white settler colonies, would describe in The Expansion of England (1881–82). While the advantages of maintaining a vast Indian dominion are ‘doubtful,’ wrote Seeley, the empire ‘involves us in enormous responsibilities and confuses our minds with problems of hopeless difficulty.’ ‘May we not feel tempted to exclaim that it was an evil hour for England when the daring genius of Clive turned a trading company into a political Power?’ (153). Such harrowed liberal puzzlement illuminates how Lizzie’s ruinous ‘filching’ allegorized imperial illiberality, anticipating the emergence of self-critique (Eustace Diamonds 1:40).

Yet, as an instance of the geopolitical aesthetic at work, Lizzie does more than figure increasing liberal unease. The embodiment of an actively performed New Imperial aesthetic—hyper-romantic, grandiose, and acquisitive—she also represents an attendant break with the conventions that govern Trollope’s realism, thus making The Eustace Diamonds the most idiosyncratic of the Palliser novels. According to Kendrick, Lizzie is Trollope’s ‘attempt to represent realistically the opposite of realism, to appropriate and
condemn a way of using language which is inimical to that of the Trollopian novel' (137). Lizzie’s anti-realism, Kendrick suggests, is a sally on poetry; but this depoliticized interpretation overlooks the novel’s engagement with imperialism. For if Lucy Morris instances would-be ethical intersubjectivity undone by imperial realpolitik, Lizzie, her Tory supplement, marks the bottom of that slippery slope: not just the failure of communicative ethics, but the practice of communication as non-ethics. Lizzie’s pernicious performativity does not, as Kendrick believes, indict romantic ideals and poetic genres so much as indict them in the specific form of New Imperial trappings.

As a Disraeli-like schemer, pursuing her interests through intrigue and self-invention, Lizzie introduces a stylistic referentiality that is alien to Trollope’s ‘pellucid’ linguistic ideal. Lizzie troubles the desire for transparent communication not merely because she lies, but because the ‘truths’ she dissimulates are often plausible. Thus, if Lizzie is at her most glaringly Disraeliesque when she produces self-aggrandizing falsehoods such as her alleged ownership of Eustace property, in formal terms, she is even more radical as the performer of homelier mimics. Seeking to seduce her cousin Frank, Lizzie’s ‘dress was such as a woman would wear to receive her brother, and yet it had been studied. She had no gems about her but what she might well wear in her ordinary life, and yet the very rings on her fingers had not been put on without reference to her cousin Frank’ (1.212). The Lizzie of this scene denaturalizes the ordinary, exposing it as but another posture through which to pursue self-interest. Such Disraeli-like stage props should, according to An Autobiography, ‘prick the conscience’ (166); yet, Frank is an all-too-willing participant in Lizzie’s theater of the ordinary. As Frank threatens to adopt Lizzie’s self-inventing worldview, the presumed normative opposition between Lucy and Lizzie or his own ‘true’ and ‘false’ impulses loses its foundation. There is, Frank tells Lizzie,

> a cringing and almost contemptible littleness about honesty, which hardly allows it to assert itself. The really honest man can never say a word to make those who don’t know of his honesty believe that it is there… Let two unknown men be competitors for any place… and who can doubt but the dishonest man would be chosen rather than the honest? Honesty goes about with a hang-dog look about him, as though knowing that he cannot be trusted till he be proved. Dishonesty carries his eyes high, and assumes that any question respecting him must be considered to be unnecessary (2:124–25; emphasis added).

As he considers ‘honesty’ from this instrumental calculus, Frank describes a self-effacing performative style that is vastly inferior to Disraeliesque self-fashioning. The ‘philosophy’ he articulates (2:125) contradicts the key moment in Phineas Redux in which Finn’s performance of political honesty punches through the party system that normalizes cynical ambition and unprincipled rhetoric. As against the author whose core belief is that ‘honesty is the best policy,’ Frank taps a fear that swaggering realpolitik may not be the contemptible byproduct of imperial modernity but modernity’s very mode.

To be sure, Trollope’s conflict between ethical idealism and unflinching realism is traceable partly to the conservative politics of an author opposed to any but the most gradualistic change. In more formal terms, Trollope’s narrator struggles unsuccessfully to control the novel’s experiment in anti-realist characterization. ‘The world is so false, so material, so worldly!’ the narrator wants to say again and again—as though unaware that Lizzie utters this very pronouncement while she urges Lucy Morris to accept a bribe (1:139). Like the invention of heirlooms to ground an imperial ethics, Lizzie’s hyper-romantic performative style co-opts normative assertions, transforming them into the rhetorical tool of her self-fashioning arsenal.
Trollope’s sociological realism—whether lightly romantic in the mode of Barsetshire or darkly naturalistic as in the global capitalist novels, offers a nuanced aesthetic capture. If, as I have argued, Lizzie marks the representational limits of such realism—its wishful normative tenets as powerless to control her aesthetic play as Lucy’s ‘liberal’ ethics are to justify the imperialism with which she is complicit—she is, simultaneously, the sign of a Trollopian power to stretch form beyond the crude anti-realism of the racialized scapegoat. What is more, Disraeli himself seems to have agreed: when the two men met for the first time in 1871, Disraeli was ‘quick to compliment Trollope on the main character of The Eustace Diamonds’ (Teal 66). Trollope’s reply appears to have been silence.

Short Biography

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Notes

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1 For examples of the influential Marxist criticism to which I allude, see Lukács, The Historical Novel, and Fredric Jameson, ‘Cognitive Mapping.’

2 Jameson takes the year of the Berlin Conference, 1884, as emblematic of ‘the codification of the new imperialist world system’ (‘Modernism and Imperialism’ 44). Yet, several earlier forms of imperial expansion—for example, slaveholding colonies in the West Indies, white settlement colonies in North America and Australia, the colonization of Ireland, and territorial empire in South Asia—produced the kind of spatial disconnect that Jameson believes was ‘new’ to the late nineteenth century. I expand on this argument in the introduction to my current book project, The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic.


4 On free trade imperialism see, for example, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, ‘The Imperialism of Free Trade,’ and Bernard Semmel, The Rise of Free Trade Imperialism.


6 For Trollope’s comparison between The Eustace Diamonds and The Moonstone, see An Autobiography 218. The first article to notice the connection between the two novels is Henry James Wye Milley, ‘The Moonstone and The Eustace Diamonds.’

7 As what I am calling sociological realism, Trollope’s mature works are characterized by density of description; a refusal to figure consolatory private realms; the skillful interlacing of political and domestic plots; and, most distinctive in the Palliser period, the vivid capture of world-historical processes of capitalist globalization including the reign of speculative finance, the return of imperialism’s expansionist thrust, the massification of politics, and the visible commoditization of entire lifeworlds.

8 See W. J. McCormack’s ‘Introduction’ to The Eustace Diamonds, xxiv. As Nicholas Dames’s paper in this conference cluster allows us to see, the Sawab’s non-characterhood is built into the novel’s form through the device of chapter naming: the Sawab, that is, is introduced in a chapter devoted to another character: the third chapter in Volume 1, entitled ‘Lucy Morris.’ Chapter titles based on a character’s name, Dames suggests, can ‘be taken, synecdochally, as indicative of that character.’ Given that the Sawab is, to say the very least, deprived of such synecdochic rendering, it is worth quoting at length from the paragraph in which his grievous imperial situation is first described, quite literally sandwiched between a detailed account of Lucy’s appearance and her supposedly superlative...
empathic qualities: ‘She was but a little thing…Her forehead was low and broad, with prominent temples, on which it was her habit to clasp tightly her little outstretched fingers as she sat listening to you. Of listeners she was the very best, for she would always be saying a word or two, just to help you,—the best word that could be spoken, and then again she would be hanging on your lips. There are listeners who show by their mode of listening that they listen as a duty,—not because they are interested. Lucy Morris was not such a one. She would take up your subject, whatever it was, and make it her own. There was forward just then a question as to whether the Sawab of Mygawb should have twenty millions of rupees paid to him and be placed upon a throne, or whether he should be kept in prison all his life. The British world generally could not be made to interest itself about the Sawab, but Lucy positively mastered the subject, and almost got Lord Fawn into a difficulty by persuading him to stand up against his chief on behalf of the injured prince’ (1: 25; emphasis added).

9 The discussion of Lucy, Lord Fawn and the Sawab in the following two paragraphs is abridged from Lauren M. E. Goodlad, ‘The Eustace Diamonds and “The Great Parliamentary Bore.”’

10 According to The Times’s reviewer, ‘Lord Fawn is interesting in spite of his small ideas, his slow perceptions, and, above all, his eminent respectability’ (Smalley 374). Likewise, The Spectator described ‘the picture of Lord Fawn’s official and personal weakness, and upright moral cowardice,’ as ‘one of the most striking of Mr. Trollope’s innumerable striking studies of modern life’ (373).

11 For a valuable discussion of Trollope’s racial views see Catherine Hall, ‘Going a-Trolloping: Imperial Man Travels the Empire.’ On extinction discourses see Brantlinger, Dark Vanishings.

12 On this point see Christopher Harvie, The Centre of Things, 92–3.


14 Trollope repeatedly associated Disraeli with ‘conjuring.’ For example, in An Autobiography, he described the typical hero of Disraeli’s fiction as an ‘audacious conjurer’ (166). Running for a parliamentary seat in 1868, he described Disraeli’s politics as ‘hocus pocus’ and ‘conjuring tricks’ (Hall, Trollope, 395). Trollope’s campaign speech thus fused disdain for opportunistic politics with a mode of rhetoric that, as Karen Kurt Teal has noted, portrays ‘the Jew as wizard’ (59).

15 For ‘shy mendacity’ see The Spectator review (Smalley 372); for ‘cynic solitude’ see Trollope’s 1869 article, ‘Mr. Disraeli and the Mint,’ in Writings for Saint Pauls Magazine 448; for ‘paint and unreality’ and ‘paste diamonds,’ both references to Disraeli’s novels, see An Autobiography 166–67. In The Eustace Diamonds, Trollope describes Lucy Morris as ‘real stone’ in contrast to Lizzie’s ‘paste’ (2.230).

16 For ‘Asian blood,’ an anonymous reference to Disraeli, see Wohl 396. On Trollope’s use of the ‘blackamoor’ phrase in various works, see Laurie Langbauer, who suggests that Trollope takes part in a ‘familiar Victorian equation in which foreign equals Jewish equals black’ (123).

17 See Trollope’s call for a ‘pellucid’ fiction in which the novelist’s language would function like an electric current conducting ‘the mind of the writer to the mind of the reader’ (Autobiography 151).

Works Cited


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